21.11.2007, Australia and Thailand had asked for more information on the subsidies provided by India to its sugar exporters.

(b) It has been emphasized that most of India's sugarcane growers are small and marginal farmers and in view of the mounting cane price arrears, Government has taken various measures, including an export assistance scheme, in order to ensure timely payments to the growers. Government has been maintaining that the measures taken are in consonance with India's WTO commitments.

India's place in global flower bazaar

647. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite having the world's largest (117,000 hectares) acreage under flower cultivation, India remains a marginal player in the global flower bazaar;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the cause of poor exports is infrastructural deficiencies as the existing systems of handling, processing and transportation are not what will help flowers to survive; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to revamp the domestic flower marketing system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) India's share in the world floriculture trade is negligible. However India is not having the largest acreage under flower cultivation in the world. The area under flower cultivation in the country in 2006-07 was 142,000 hectares.

(b) Infrastructural deficiency is one of the reasons for low floriculture exports.

(c) To enhance production and productivity of horticultural produce including flowers the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is implementing two Centrally Sponsored Schemes *viz.,* "National Horticulture Mission (NHM)" and Technology Mission for integrated Development of Horticulture in the North Eastern States (TMNE) for holistic development of horticulture sector including floriculture duly ensuring end to end approach having backward and forward linkages covering research, production, post harvest management, processing and marketing with the active participation of all stake holders. Government has also approved setting up of Flower Auction Centres at Bangalore, Mumbai, Noida & Kolkata for providing marketing platform for trading of flowers.

Poor ranking due to procedural requirments

648. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India ranks poorly in doing business with lots of procedural requirments;

(b) whether it is also a fact that it takes 1420 days to enforce a contract in India which is more than double of Brazil 616 stage, 3.5 times China's 406 stage and more than 5 times Russia's 281 days;